

Soto FY2021 Appropriations Wins: Funding

[H.R. 7608 - State, Foreign Operations, Agriculture, Rural Development, Interior, Environment, Military Construction, and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2021](#)

State, Foreign Operations

Bill Language

- **Venezuela** - \$30 million to democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela.
 - [Pg. 227](#) of HR 7608

Report Language

- **Monitoring and combating trafficking in persons** - \$16,000,000 for the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.
 - [Pg. 135](#) of H.Rept.116-444.
- **Waste Recycling**-\$7,000,000 for global environment and energy programs.
 - [Pg. 55](#) of H.Rept.116-444.
- **Nicaragua**-\$10 million to promote democracy and rule of law assistance.
 - [Pg.120](#) of H. Rept. 116-444

Agriculture

Report Language

- **Sensor Technologies.**—The Committee encourages NIFA to work cooperatively with non-profit institutions, consortia, and land-grant universities to conduct research on advanced sensor manufacturing techniques to improve the agricultural industry.
 - [Pg. 28](#) of H. Rept. 116-446
- **Agricultural Research Facilities.**—The Committee directs ARS to explore ways in which its labs could be better utilized, in cooperation with non-profits, consortiums, and land grant universities, to achieve new scientific goals that benefit the nation’s food and agriculture system. In addition, the Committee encourages ARS to work with the entities listed above to develop a smart agriculture industry technology roadmap. This research strategy can help guide the future development of technology in the agriculture industry and maintain U.S. leadership.

- [Pg. 18](#) of H. Rept. 116-446
- **Blockchain Food Traceability.**—The Committee notes the potential of blockchain technology to revolutionize the practice of food traceability, tracking food products from origin through every point of contact on the journey to the consumer. The Committee is interested in how blockchain technology can be utilized to accurately trace food and mitigate the risks associated with food contaminated outbreaks and to develop effective strategies for controls. The Committee encourages NIFA to coordinate research to reduce the risk of foodborne illness through the application of blockchain technology.
 - [Pg. 27](#) of H. Rept. 116-446

Interior

Bill Language

- Language to prohibit funds from being used by the Secretary of Interior or BOEM to conduct or authorize oil and gas preleasing, leasing, or related activities, in any planning area where the 2017-2022 OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Proposed Final Program (Nov. 2016) did not schedule leases.
 - [Pg. 504](#) of HR 7608

Report Language

- **Everglades Restoration**
 - Provides minimum of \$15,238,000 across multiple programs for Everglades Restoration
 - We requested \$20,006,000
 - [Pg. 28](#) of the H.Rept 116-448
 - Recommends [\\$10,282,000](#) for the Everglades Restoration Program
 - We requested \$5 million to implement the CERP
- **Harmful Algal Blooms**
 - Recognizes the increasing threat of HABs to coastal and freshwater ecosystems; encourages the Agency to support and conduct research that promotes scientific progress toward preventing and controlling HABs
 - [Page 86](#) of the H. Rept 116-448
 - Includes all of our requested language except for the provision asking the Agency to encourage data and information sharing among entities conducting research on preventing and controlling HABs.
- **USGS, Sinkholes**

- Incorporates our language encouraging USGS to use the 3DEP program to quickly and remotely identify sinkholes and consider areas with high risk of sinkhole development
 - [Page 49](#) of the H. Rept. 116-448
- **Coral Reef Health**
 - Language we requested included in full
 - [Page 5](#) of the H. Rept. 116-448
- **USGS, Natural Hazards**
 - Includes our language about the lack of knowledge and off-shore real-time instrumentation for the Cascadia subduction zone, recommends continued development of an early earthquake warning system and expansion into locations that will benefit from early detection of earthquakes, including the Caribbean Basin
 - Requested because of PR earthquakes
 - [Page 46](#) of the H. Rept. 116-448
- **NPS, Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers**
 - Includes our language encouraging NPS to study the feasibility of including sites undergoing restoration for possible inclusion in the Wild & Scenic Rivers Program, so that nearly-restored sites may be considered before restoration is complete.
 - Requested because this was NR majority's main objection to moving on our Kissimmee River bill
 - [Page 36](#) of the H. Rept. 116-448

Programmatic Funding

- Requested 2,862,893,000 for environmental programs and management
 - Includes 2,846,676,000 recommended
- Requested 117,902,000 for USGS Core Science Systems
 - Includes 252,291,000 recommended

Milcon-VA

Report Language

- ***Construction of Housing for Rural Homeless Veterans.*** The Committee is interested in what statutory changes would be needed for VA to be able purchase and construct, single unit, duplex, renovated shipping containers for housing purposes, Micro or 'Tiny Homes' for homeless veterans. ([Page 99](#) of H. Rept 116-445).

- ***Modeling and Simulation Treatment of PTSD.*** – Submit an updated report, to include the the feasibility of such a modeling and simulation program to determine the value of exposure therapy utilizing therapeutic virtual environments using real-time modeling and simulation training to treat PTSD in veterans. ([Page 51](#) of H. Rept 116-445).
- ***Exposure to herbicide-related toxins.***— Department is to reference data from existing medical records of veterans who served in Vietnam, Thailand, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, America Samoa, and all other geographic areas where these toxic substances were dispersed. to determine the percentage of veterans from the above referenced subgroup that have more frequent or unexplained diseases compared to the civilian population. ([Page 82-83](#) of H. Rept 116-445).
- ***Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Monitoring.***— Department to reference data from existing medical records of veterans and their dependents who resided at U.S. Military bases in Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands for six months or more from 1980 through 1990, and Veterans and their dependents who resided at U.S. Military bases in Greece, Turkey, Spain, Portugal, and Italy for six months or more from 1980 through 1996 to determine the percentage of veterans from the above referenced subgroup that have more frequent or unexplained symptoms or diseases associated with CJD compared to the civilian population. ([Page 69](#) of H. Rept 116-445).
- ***Gulf War Illness Studies.***—The Committee recommends the Department continue to conduct epidemiological studies regarding the prevalence of Gulf War illness, morbidity, and mortality in Persian Gulf War veterans and the development of effective treatments, preventions, and cures. ([Page 83-84](#) of H. Rept 116-445).
- ***Financial Hardship and Bankruptcy.***—The Committee continues to support VA programs that combat the root causes of veteran and dependent financial hardship, which is a known contributory factor to negative outcomes such as mental health issues, substance use disorder, and suicide. ([Page 36](#) of H. Rept 116-445).
- ***Legal Assistance for the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program.***—Full language. The Committee notes that university law schools are willing to work with veterans on a pro-bono basis to provide legal assistance. Within funds provided, the Department is encouraged to establish one or more pilot projects to partner SSVF grantees with university law schools in rural areas or within underserved populations to enhance legal assistance to Veterans. ([Page 54](#) of H. Rept 116-445).
- ***Agritherapy.***- The Department is urged to consider agritherapy for inclusion among VA's Complementary and Alternative Medicine therapies. Additionally, the Committee supports a pilot program to train veterans in agricultural vocations, including urban and vertical farming, while also tending to behavioral and mental health needs with behavioral healthcare services and treatments from licensed providers at no fewer than three locations. ([Page 49](#) of H. Rept.

116-445).

- ***Veterans Electronic Health Record and data management study on blockchain technology.*** The Committee directs the Department to undertake a study on how blockchain technology can help ensure that its EHRM network and IT infrastructure will effectively support the Cerner implementation and its subsequent use. ([Page 96](#) of H. Rept 116-445).
- ***Performance Measures.***— Include in the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report entitled “Better Measures Needed to Assess Regional Office Performance in Processing Claims” (GAO 19-15), evaluate the feasibility of satellite congressional member offices within VAMCs. ([Page 37](#) of H. Rept 116-445).

[H.R. 7617 - Defense, Commerce, Justice, Science, Energy and Water Development, Financial Services and General Government, Homeland Security, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2021](#)

Defense

[Report](#) | [Bill Text](#)

Report Language

- **AI and DL for CPS-Denied Combat Vehicle Navigation**
 - Includes \$20,000,000 to support the A2I2 initiative to accelerate innovation in areas such as artificial intelligence and machine and deep learning tech under ARL purview
 - Requested \$5,000,000 for a uni/army research lab vehicle navigation tech
 - [Page 254](#) of H. Rept 116-453
- **Distributed Ledger Technology Research and Development**
 - Included suggested language recognizing importance of blockchain
 - [Page 318](#) of H. Rept 116-453

Programmatic Language

- Requested \$25,174,903,000 for the **Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Defense-Wide**
 - Includes 25,938,027,000 recommended
- Requested \$12,396,895,000 for the **Research, Development, Test and Evaluation**
 - Includes \$104,348,089,000 recommended
- Requested \$34,007,519,000 for the **Defense Health Program**
 - Includes \$33,297,902,000 recommended
 - \$100,000,000 should be used to fund **Prostate Cancer Research**
 - Includes \$110,000,000 for the peer-reviewed prostate cancer research program
- Requested \$12,396,895,000 for the **Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Army**
 - Includes \$13,126,499,000 recommended
- Requested \$25,174,903,000 for the **Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Defense-Wide**
 - Includes \$25,938,027,000 recommended
- Requested \$46,066,370 for the **Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Air Force**
 - Includes \$45,566,955,000 recommended

Commerce, Justice, Science

Report Language

- **Leo And Spaceflight Operations**
 - Recognizes the increasing global competition in the space market, especially internationally and encourages use of domestic launch providers
 - [Page 127](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
 - Does not include specific mentions of nor funding for WFF and KSC
- **NSF, Astronomy**
 - Includes our language supporting ground-based observatories, names Arecibo Observatory
 - [Pages 120-121](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
- **NIST, Cybersecurity and Privacy**
 - Language we requested included in full except for funding
 - [Page 24](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
- **NSF, Algorithmic bias research**
 - Requested language included in full.
 - [Page 133](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
- **NSF, AI**
 - Included funding for AI, no less than \$10,000,000 above FY2020
 - [Page 23](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
 - No language for workforce development w/minority institutions
- **Outer Planets and Ocean Worlds**
 - Included
 - \$403,500,000 for the Europa Clipper Mission
 - [Pages 120-121](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
- **NTIA, Spectrum Management for Science**
 - Language included in full, edited for clarity
 - [Page 21](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
- **NSF, Quantum Initiative**
 - Included \$8,000,000 for Quantum Information Science; rejects proposed budget cuts
 - Encourages NIST to expand collaboration efforts
 - [Pages 22-23](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
- **NOAA, High Performance Computing**
 - \$42,000,000 for OAR Research Supercomputing
 - [Page 48](#) of H. Rept. 116-445

- \$17,800,000 for High Performance Computing Initiatives
 - [Page 39](#) of H. Rept. 116-445
- **NSF, High-Performance Computing**
 - Included most language, generalizing international implications
 - [Page 132](#) of H. Rept. 116-445

Programmatic Language

- Requested \$292,500,000 for EDA Programs, \$118,500,000 for Public Works
 - Includes
 - \$356,000,000 for the **Economic Development Administration (EDA)**
 - \$314,000,000 for the **Economic Development Assistance Programs**
 - \$122,000,000 for **EDA's Public Works** program

Energy and Water

[Report](#) | [Bill Text](#)

Report Language

- **Shoaling in Lake Cypress, Florida**
 - Language included in full, minus C-35 canal details
 - [Page 24](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
- **Resilient Distribution Systems**
 - Requested \$4,000,000 is provided for university-based research and development
 - Included mention of the systems with use of available funds for microgrid demonstration
 - [Pages 112-113](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
- **South Florida Ecosystem Restoration, Florida**
 - Language included in full
 - [Page 37](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
- **EERE – Solar Energy**
 - Included
 - \$55,000,000 for Concentrating Solar Power research, development, and demonstration
 - \$280,000,000 for Solar Energy
 - Requested \$285,100,000
 - \$5,000,000 for advanced thermal desalination technologies

- \$77,000,000 for Photovoltaic Research and Development
 - Requested \$72,000,000
 - \$35,000,000 for Balance of System Soft Cost Reduction
 - \$1,000,000 for the joint Solar Ready Vets
 - \$5,000,000 for the National Community Solar Partnership program
 - [Page 103](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
- **Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning**
 - Included \$125,000,000 for Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
 - Requested \$124,500,000
 - [Page 124](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
- **Digital Energy Innovation with Decentralized Technologies**
 - Requested research into uses of blockchain in energy sector w/report
 - Some language included in [page 94](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
 - Importance of blockchain mentioned as a possibility to explore, no report
- **Blockchain for Electric Grid Modernization**
 - Included rec to research blockchain and decentralized tech uses within energy sector and grid modernization, no report
 - [Page 94](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
- **Continuing Authorities Program**
 - Wetland habitats impacted by Corps activity are eligible to compete for funding
 - [Pages 34-35](#) of H. Rept. 116-449
- **Aquatic Plant Control Program**
 - Included “additional funding” for R&D, flowering rush and hydrilla verticillate control
 - Requested \$1,000,000 requested for each plant
 - Requested \$5,000,000 for invasive aquatic plants nationwide R&D
 - Included \$15,000,000 for **watercraft inspection stations and rapid response**
 - Requested \$5,000,000
 - \$3,000,000 shall be for related monitoring
 - Requested \$1,000,000
- **New Starts within Programmatic Line Items**
 - Language included in full

Programmatic Funding

- Includes 160,000,000 for **Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response**
 - Requested \$184,621,000
- Requested \$103,000,000 for **Infrastructure Security and Energy Restoration**
 - Cmte needs a report from the Department before allocating funds
- Included \$195,000,000 for the **Office of Electricity**, which funds electricity delivery
 - Requested \$195,045,000 for Electricity Delivery
 - Resilient Distribution Systems – within available funds
 - Requested \$45,000,000
- Includes \$280,000,000 for **Solar Energy**
 - Requested \$285,100,000
- Includes 7,050,000,000 for the **Office of Science**
 - Requested \$5,837,806
 - Includes \$125,000,000 for **Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning** activities
 - Requested \$124,500,000
 - Includes \$235,000,000 for **Quantum Information Science** initiatives
 - Requested \$124,500,000
- Includes \$67,000,000 **Continuing Authorities Program’s Project Modifications for Improvement of the Environment** (Section 1135)
 - Requested \$20,000,000
- Includes \$15,000,000 for **Watercraft Inspection Stations** and \$3,000,000 shall be for related monitoring.
 - Requested \$25,000,000 for **Aquatic Plant Control Program**

Financial Services

[Report](#) | [Bill Text](#)

Bill Language

- **IRS Taxpayer services**
 - Language Included in full re: pre-filing assistance and education, filing and account services, taxpayer advocacy services, and other services as authorized; with monetary changes

- Amounts included ([Pages 15-16](#) of the bill text)
 - \$2,602,554,000 for all **IRS services**
 - Requested \$2,562,554,000
 - \$11,000,000 for the **Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program** (as requested)
 - \$13,000,000 for **Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic Grants**
 - Requested \$12,000,000
 - \$28,000,000 for **Tax Return Preparation Assistance**
 - Requested \$25,000,000
 - \$211,000,000 for **Taxpayer Advocate Service**
 - Requested \$207,000,000
 - \$5,500,000 for **Identity Theft Casework**
 - Requested \$6,000,000
- **DACA Recipients** authorized to receive compensation from the government as employees
 - [Page 129](#) of the bill text

Report Language

- **Student Loans** – Committee directs Treasury, Federal banking regulators to help private student loan borrowers
 - [Page 13](#) of the report
- **Puerto Rico Technical Assistance** – provide a report on tech assistance to PR in FY2020 and how it plans to assist in FY21
 - [Page 12](#) of the report
- **Taxpayer ID Theft** – Language included to ensure IRS pursues cases of fraudulent tax returns and directs IRS to report on their plan to ensure victimless resolution
 - [Page 25](#) of the report
- **Financial Literacy** - directs Treasury to work FLEC to develop materials that effectively serve at-risk groups, such as communities of color and historically disadvantaged individuals in expanding financial literacy
 - [Page 11](#) of the report
- **Fraudulent Calls to Seniors** – urges FTC to investigate robocalls to defraud seniors through spoofing
 - [Page 64](#) of the report

- **Fraudulent Health Care Calls** – directs the Commission to prioritize investigations into robocalls that attempt to defraud patients, physicians, hospitals, and other health care stakeholders
 - [Page 64](#) of the report
- **Delivery Vehicle Climate Control** – strongly encourages USPS to ensure all vehicles are equipped with proper climate control technologies in its fleet
 - [Page 103](#)
- **Cryptocurrency** – encourages the FTC to work with the SEC and relevant agencies to identify and investigate fraud related to cryptocurrencies market and discuss methods to empower and protect consumers
 - [Page 65](#) of the report
- **Territorial/Tribal Access to Broadband** – encourages FCC to increase broadband access on Tribal lands and territories
 - Supports the “Uniting Puerto Rico” fund to combine USVI and PR funding to rebuild networks damaged by 2017 hurricanes
 - FCC encouraged to use resources such as ONAP to increase access in Tribal lands
 - [Page 59](#) of the report
- **Cybersecurity** – recognizes importance and directs OCCIP to brief cmte on efforts to provide safeguards against cyber and financial service attacks
 - [Page 12](#) of the report
- **Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy** – concerns continue, expects ONDCP will include a counternarcotics strategy in future version of the National Drug Control Strategy
 - [Page 39-40](#) of the report
- **Enhancing the Utility of the Fedscope Database** – urges OPM to provide information about the number of Federal employees employed in each county and Congressional district in the US, with a report within 120 days of when the information will become available
 - [Page 91](#) of the report
- **Drinking Water** – ensure access to all Federal employees
 - [Page 8](#) of the report
- **Virtual Currencies Guidance** – directs IRS to continue updating guidance on the taxation requirements for virtual currencies
 - [Page 27](#) of the report
- **IT Infrastructure** – directs OPM to consider blockchain technologies when looking into improving its IT security and infrastructure
 - [Pages 90-91](#) of the report

Programmatic Funding

- **Includes** \$11,000,000 for the Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program (as requested)

Labor HHS

[Report](#) | [Bill Text](#)

Report Language

- Funding for the **National Early Childcare Collaboratives** to support direct provider-level training to State and local systems.
 - [Page 77](#) of H. Rept. 116-450
- The Committee further recommends that consideration should be given to **community-based experiential training for students focusing on veterans, first responders, or marginalized populations**.
 - [Page 50](#) of H. Rept. 116-450
- **Artificial Intelligence**.-- The Committee notes that it is not yet fully understood the extent of the disruption Artificial Intelligence will cause and how it will impact the workforce. Therefore, the Committee emphasizes the importance of anticipating changes in the workforce, investing in worker retraining programs, and providing adequate funding for registered apprenticeship programs.
 - [Page 27](#) of H. Rept. 116-450
- **PTSD in First Responders**.—The Committee is aware of research indicating that individuals working in the civilian first responder disciplines of law enforcement, fire services, and emergency medical services are at greater risk for full or partial post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than most other occupations because their responsibilities routinely entail confrontation with traumatic stressors. The Committee encourages SAMHSA to examine PTSD among this population, including prevalence rate, risk factors, symptom presentation, course, comorbidities, and rates of suicidal thoughts and actions.
 - [Pg. 152](#) of H. Rept. 116-450

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development

[Report](#) | [Bill Text](#)

Report Language

- **Tiny homes**.—The Department has made great efforts to find housing for the homeless, including homeless veterans. However, HUD has not tested the concept of awarding grants to eligible entities to purchase and construct rural, single unit, tiny homes for homeless individuals. This approach could provide a pathway to stable housing for the homeless, including homeless veterans. The Committee directs the Department to outline the legislative

changes required to establish such a program on a pilot basis and the feasibility and estimated cost of the concept. The report with the aforementioned items should be provided to the House Financial Services Committee, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees, and House and Senate Appropriations Committees no later than 60 days after enactment of this Act.

- [Pg. 127](#) of H. Rept. 116-452
- ***Bus and bus facilities.***—The Committee supports the FAST Act’s inclusion of competitive grants in the buses and bus facilities grant program and encourages FTA to follow the guidance set forth in the FAST Act when developing selection criteria for the program. Consistent with section 3017 of the FAST Act, the age and condition of buses, bus fleets, related equipment, and bus-related facilities should be the primary components of selection criteria. The amounts provided under this heading are in addition to the amounts provided under “Transit Formula Grants”.
 - [Pg. 80](#) of H. Rept. 116-452
- ***Transitional housing for individuals exiting recovery.***—The Committee recognizes the importance of stable transitional living environments for individuals in recovery from substance misuse disorder, including opioid addiction, and includes \$25,000,000 for activities authorized under section 8071 of the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act. The Committee directs HUD to encourage CDBG recipients to provide funding to organizations that offer transitional housing opportunities to those in recovery, further directs HUD to give special consideration to recipients that offer wrap-around services for those exiting recovery, and looks forward to receiving HUD’s guidance on how relevant programs operated.
 - [Pg. 120](#) of H. Rept. 116-452
- ***Contract tower program.***—The Committee recommendation includes \$172,800,000 for the contract tower program, including the contract tower cost share program. The Committee continues to strongly support the FAA contract tower program as a cost-effective and efficient way to provide air traffic control services to smaller airports across the country. The Committee expects FAA to continue to operate the 256 contract towers currently in the program, annualize funding for towers that will be added in 2020, and provide full-year funding for new airports expected to be added to the program in fiscal year 2021.
 - [Pg. 29](#) of H. Rept. 116-452